

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

The following Listing of Claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

Claim 1 (withdrawn): A skeleton structure member made by disposing a solidified granular bulk material obtained by bonding together and thereby solidifying multiple granules inside a skeleton member of a transport machine and/or a space bounded by the skeleton member and a panel member peripheral thereto,

wherein, in the solidified granular bulk material, the granules are bonded together by surface fusion and an internal pressure is created by expansion.

Claim 2 (currently amended): A method for manufacturing a skeleton structure member ~~made by disposing a solidified granular bulk material obtained by bonding together and thereby solidifying multiple granules of a transport machine.~~
the method comprising:

placing a bag or a vessel that has been pre-packed with multiple discrete microcapsules that include a core substance consisting of a liquid or a solid wrapped with a thermoplastic resin film inside a skeleton member ~~of a transport machine~~ and/or a space bounded by the skeleton member and a panel member peripheral thereto, ~~said method including the steps of placing granules, which are made by wrapping a core substance consisting of a liquid or a solid with a film and pre-packed into a bag or a vessel, into the skeleton member and/or space in an un-expanded~~

state; and;

heating the ~~granules~~ microcapsules to gasify the core substance and soften the thermoplastic film and thereby ~~causing cause~~ the ~~granules~~ microcapsules to expand and thus form hollow granules that, upon cooling, solidify within the skeleton member and/or the space bounded by the skeleton member and the panel member peripheral thereto and bond together as a solidified granular bulk material.

Claim 3 (canceled).

Claim 4 (currently amended): The method according to claim-4_2 wherein upon cooling the granules that are bonded together each have an external diameter within the range of from about 10 μ m to about 200 μ m.

Claim 5 (currently amended): The method according to claim-4_2 wherein the heating step is conducted at a temperature within the range of from about 130°C to about 200°C.

Claim 6 (previously presented): The method according to claim 5 wherein the heating step is conducted on a paint drying line provided in a production line for drying paint on the transport machine.

Claim 7 (currently amended): The method according to claim-4_2 wherein the skeleton structure member is a front side frame of a vehicle body.

Claim 8 (currently amended): The method according to claim-4, 2 wherein the skeleton structure member is a side sill of a passenger compartment of a vehicle body.

Claim 9 (currently amended): The method according to claim-4, 2 wherein the skeleton structure member is a front floor cross member of a vehicle body.

Claim 10 (currently amended): The method according to claim-4, 2 wherein the skeleton structure member is a front pillar of a vehicle body.

Claim 11 (currently amended): The method according to claim-4, 2 wherein the skeleton structure member is a center pillar of a vehicle body.

Claim 12 (currently amended): The method according to claim-4, 2 wherein the skeleton structure member is a rear pillar of a vehicle body.

Claim 13 (currently amended): The method according to claim-4, 2 wherein the skeleton structure member is a door beam of a vehicle body.

Claim 14 (currently amended): The method according to claim-4, 2 wherein the skeleton structure member is a roof side rail of a vehicle body.